

Bike/Walk Midland - Adds to Quality of Life

Sometimes in our fast-paced lives, we lose touch with the world around us and become so inwardly focused that we forget how to enjoy each day. Walking, biking, or other forms of non-motorized transportation (NMT) can add to our quality of life by letting us reconnect with the world around us, experience each day more fully, and just enjoy the weather and being outside. Not only that, it doesn't take very many NMT users to significantly reduce traffic congestion for everyone else: the Federal Highway Administration reports that 3% fewer cars = nearly 30 % less peak congestion.

Quality of life has many aspects, but includes personal health and fitness, economic well being, a clean environment, and experiencing enjoyment on a regular basis. Here's a question for you: How many people, right now, are driving a car on their way to ride a stationary bike in a health club? If that same person spent that same amount of time riding a bike to work or shopping, walking to a park, or otherwise getting around without a car, think about how much their quality of life would improve.

NMT can have a big economic impact. Compared to US averages, Portland, OR residents drive 5,000 fewer miles & spend 175 fewer hours in cars, saving \$2,500/yr. And that doesn't count reduced health care costs. Brown County, WI reports that houses adjacent to bicycling facilities sell faster and for 9% more than average.

Global warming, rising obesity rates, traffic congestion, dependence on foreign oil, leading causes of premature death, and the economy... if only there was a common solution. But there is: NMT.

For more information: www.midland-mi.org/government/departments/planning/Planning/planninghome.htm